

The Scranton Tribune

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When space will permit, The Tribune is always glad to print short letters from its friends bearing on current topics, but its rule is that these must be signed, for publication, by the writer's real name and the condition precedent to acceptance is that all contributions shall be subject to editorial revision.

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SIXTEEN PAGES.

SCRANTON, DECEMBER 20, 1902.

Our evening contemporaries, the Times and Truth, have issued interesting holiday numbers, the former comprising forty and the latter thirty-six pages, liberally bedecked with seasonable advertising. We offer to these contemporaries the compliments of the season.

Interstate Commerce.

THE REPORT of the Interstate Commerce commission, sent to congress on Wednesday, is a document meriting attention. Its contents may, for convenience, be divided into two departments: Statistical and administrative; the former showing results during the last fiscal year, the latter suggesting measures of legislation. We shall consider the results first.

Railroads with 105,385 miles of line, or ninety-eight per cent, of the country's whole mileage, earned during the year a net profit, not counting taxes, of \$2,100 a mile or \$606,616,755 altogether, an increase of \$51,000,000 over the year before, and more than \$12,000,000 more than the net earnings in 1897. Dividends on stock paid during the year (\$130,885,054) were \$200,000 more than in 1901 and nearly twice as much as in 1897. Total gross earnings were \$1,672,313,768, a sum equal to nearly \$21 for every inhabitant of the United States. For every \$1.25 received by the railroads in passenger fares, \$2.75 was received in freight fares.

The safety-appliance law passed in 1893, by which hand coupling of cars was forbidden, is shown to have worked beneficial results. The number of persons killed and injured in coupling and uncoupling cars during the year ending June 30, 1902—the first entire year reported since the law went into full effect—shows a diminution as compared with 1893, the year when the law was passed, of sixty-eight per cent. In the number killed and eighty-one per cent. in the number injured. In 1893 the number of casualties from this cause was 11,710, of which 433 were killed and 11,277 were injured. In 1902 the total number was 2,256, of which 143 were killed and 2,113 injured. This shows a reduction of 9.454; and it is to be borne in mind that the number of men engaged in this work is much greater now than it was in 1893. With regard to collisions and derailments, the figures of the commission show approximately 2.5 collisions and 1.8 derailments per 100 miles of railroad for the year; and the losses by accidents, not including damage to freight or sums paid to persons for bodily injuries or on account of death, average, roughly, \$3,800 per 100 miles of road annually.

So much, briefly, for the mathematics of the report; we come now to its ethics. Although we have the automatic coupler, there are dangers against which it does not fully provide, such as cars moved while not in complete running order; poorly constructed couplers; cars falling to couple except by violent impact, leading to breakage, delays and annoyances; men going between the cars to prepare for a second coupling trial; defective levers or rods and their connections. To promote more general compliance with the spirit of the safety-appliance law in the use of air brakes, the commission recommends the passage of an act forbidding the running of trains in which less than one-half of the cars are equipped with power brakes, in operative condition, and suitably connected to the engine, and empowering the commission to issue a general order or orders, requiring the use of power brakes on more than fifty per cent. of the cars in a train as and whenever it shall find such increased use to be practicable; and also permitting the commission, in the case of any particular road, after hearing and investigation, to permit, for a specified period, the running of trains with power brakes in use on less than fifty per cent. of the cars therein, such orders to prevent any possible hardship, due to unforeseen exigencies. The commission further recommends that the provisions relating to automatic couplers, grab irons, and height of drawbars be made to apply to all locomotive tenders, cars, and similar vehicles, both those used in interstate commerce and those in connection therewith, except those trains, cars, and locomotives exempt under the present law; and that the size, length, and location of grab irons shall be prescribed by the commission. All this relates to the better protection of railway employees, who deserve it, but a larger question is the better protection of the entire American public from discrimination and unjust exaction, and with it the report deals at length.

The tendency to combine, it points out, continues to be the most significant feature of railway development. It has its advantages, insuring, among other things, stability of rates and prompter and better service. But it also has its perils to the public and a law which might have answered the purpose when competition was relied upon to secure reasonable rates is demonstrably inadequate when that competition is displaced by the most

far-reaching and powerful combinations. So great a change in conditions calls for corresponding changes in the regulating statute. The interstate commerce act was passed sixteen years ago and has not been materially amended in thirteen years. Not only have new conditions arisen which were not within the vision of its authors, but successive court decisions have stripped the commission of power until today its functions are chiefly clerical. The report earnestly appeals to congress to enact supplementary legislation, giving the commission and the federal courts power sufficient to invest it with reasonable charges and undue discriminations. This need is one of the greatest among those now pressing for congressional attention.

The benefits of the strike, except to the dealer, cannot yet be determined, but the misery it has caused is apparent in every telegraphic item from the districts suffering from fuel famine.

Urgent Need of Currency Reform.

(Comptroller Ridgely.)

THE GREATEST demand for increased currency comes when it is required for moving crops in the farming states. If this can be supplied quickly and automatically as required by the banks in those states, and if, after performing its duty, it is returned to the banks and retained, it will mark a great advance in the improvement of our facilities for handling the vast and rapidly growing business of this country.

In the latter half of each year the problem is presented to the banks to furnish currency needed to handle from 2,500 to 3,000 millions of bushels of grain, 8 to 10 million bales of cotton, and a corresponding quantity of other farm products. The total value of these products for the year 1902 will not be far from 5,000 millions of dollars. This calls for the use of a vast sum of money. Much of it is done on bank deposit credits, by means of checks, and the increased number of banks and better means of communication enable the people in country communities to handle more and more in this way, or we should not be able to transact such an amount of business at all. So much of it, however, must be handled with currency of some sort as to make a demand for currency in large amounts, and every year there is a great deal of anxiety, and often serious disturbance in business, until the crop season is over and the money returns to those who have had to furnish it. This is a matter of more importance to the man who needs the money than the man who furnishes it. When interest rates advance it is the man who pays the higher rate who suffers the most, not the man who has the money to lend.

The people in the country who do this enormous business and produce this great wealth are entitled to better service than they get, are in fact entitled to the very best facilities which can be devised and supplied to them. It can not be an undue inflation of credit to supply these people who have just raised such quantities of the most readily salable staples the money they require in that form of bank credits represented by circulating notes. These people own land worth 13,674 millions of dollars, farm implements worth 761 millions, live stock worth 3,078 millions, and raise over 4,000 million dollars' worth of products. In the farming states there are banks with over 600 millions of capital and 70 millions of surplus. They have on hand in cash \$79 million dollars, and due from other banks \$62 millions. Here are agencies enough to perform this work and abundant bases for the credits if the law permitted it. We place no limit on the loans they make but that supplied by reserve requirements on the deposits; why should they not supply a limited amount of notes secured by two-thirds their value in bonds and made absolutely safe to the note holder by the guarantee fund raised by the tax on circulation? Such a change in the currency would not only supply the needs for crop moving, but also the currency needed for other business. Each bank could supply what it found was necessary for its own customers. The demand which generally begins in the late summer months would gradually be met as it came. In every community the supply would be in the hands of men who are familiar with local needs and conditions, and the distribution would be made where and when needed without reference to conditions elsewhere or dependence on the money market in the reserve cities and financial centers.

This would be of great benefit, not only to the people in farming districts and those handling farm products, but to the vast number of business men engaged in mining, manufacturing, mercantile, and commercial lines. Instead of the whole business public dreading the approach of the crop-moving time for fear there might come some stringency in the money market to upset their calculations and interfere with their financial arrangements, the banks would be in position to furnish the currency needed for the crops when and where it was to be used without disturbing business in other lines. In times of panic the power to issue additional notes would be an element of great strength to the banks and not of weakness. It would enable the banks to protect themselves and their customers when protection is most needed.

The increasing number of empty stockings presented for the consideration of Santa Claus Quay this season is enough to impress the good sense with the idea that he may be up against a political centipede. Mr. Darrow should not be too severe on Lackawanna county's crop of authors. He has written a book or two himself. According to accounts our minister to Liberia does not need warships to prepare his dignity as an official. He is accompanied by a revolver and razor at all times and has already left lasting impressions upon some of the dusky

citizens with whom he has had diplomatic relations.

Minister Bowen has the most difficult proposition before him that ever confronted one of the blessed peacemakers. The coal merchants of Schenectady are disposed also to assist in giving the city an undesirable reputation.

The note submitted by France to the government of Venezuela is almost too polite to be effective.

Public Schools of the Philippines

GRAPPLING with difficult problems is an essential feature of Americanism—our duty is to overcome difficulties, not to shirk them. The history of the United States is one of problem solving. It is not that this nation would not be the world-power it is today. When Thomas Jefferson made the Louisiana purchase he brought us, for the first time, into contact with more than territorial expansion, and set the pace at which our nation has traveled ever since, and in giving time to travel, while there are difficulties to be overcome, problems to be solved, and depressed peoples to be benefited and lifted up.

When we came into possession of the Philippine Islands, less than five years ago, the chief problem we had to solve, was not the pacification of the islands, but the education of 7,000,000 people, comparatively few of whom knew even the meaning of the word education. We had to deal with three distinct races—the Negrito, with 21 tribes; the Indonesian, with 16 tribes, and the Malayan, with 47 tribes, making a total of 84 different tribes. The task was stupendous. Even in the same races many of the tribes differ very greatly, not only in the degree of civilization, but in language, manners, customs and law.

Transportation, or the want of it, rather, was (and is) a serious obstacle. Only one railroad in the islands, and that only 29 miles long, a few small steamers running now and again, few good roads and not a single good bridge—this is all the facilities we found for traveling over hundreds of islands, whose total area is equal to the combined areas of the five New England states, with New York added.

Immediately the military government was established, our brave soldiers, officers and men, began to do what they could toward teaching these mixed peoples that the Stars and Stripes had not come to the Philippines to conquer and enslave, but to set free and uplift. They came to the islands, not as conquerors, and nobly they responded, men and women, with Dr. Fred W. Atkinson at their head. It was no pleasure excursion, but a self-sacrificing for the sake of depressed humanity, and for the honor of Americanism. These loyal men and women knew before they started that they would not find in the Orient, "all the comforts of home," but a difficulty was in front of us, and as true Americans, they set forth to overcome that difficulty.

Are they succeeding? Let the facts answer. Number of school divisions in operation, 1. Estimated total area, square miles, 114,792. Number of American teachers, 1,221. Number of Filipino teachers, all first taught English by the American teachers, 3,400. Children enrolled in day schools, (more than) 200,000. Enrollment in night schools (mostly adults) 25,000. In addition to the difficulties already named, Dr. Atkinson and his corps of American teachers have been hampered by the church and religious affiliations of the natives, the seasons of the year, the customs and notions of centuries and the natural inertia of the people. We can form a further idea of the difficulty of this work from the fact that when Spain acquired the islands over 300 years ago most of the Philippine Islanders could read and write their own language, when we took their place the mass of the people could hardly do more. We had to begin where, and in the way, Spain should have begun three centuries ago. It is to be regretted that, owing to impaired hearing, Dr. Atkinson whose work has been so faithfully and ably done, has been compelled to resign the general superintendency and return home for special medical treatment. To conclude this article I quote from his last report: "The history of education in any country, represented graphically, would show certain sudden departures from previous conditions, and these momentary changes would be found to coincide with events of great political importance. Spain experienced such at various times, but, in my opinion, it remained for the Spanish-American war to inaugurate a thorough awakening to present needs and a new interest in matters educational in the Philippine Islands. To succeed Dr. Atkinson as general superintendent, Governor Taft has appointed Elmer B. Bryan, of Bloomington, Ind. at present superintendent of the city schools of Manila. The Filipino teachers petitioned for Mr. Bryan's appointment. The educational work in the Philippines is a weighty contract, but the outlook is bright."

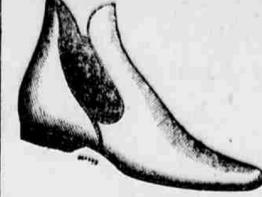
FAIR PLAY FOR THE NEGRO.

Editor of The Tribune: Sir: I have been thinking all the time your paper was a clean, honest one, but now I know your paper should be read by every honest citizen in the world, when you stated in your editorial on Monday morning, the 16th, in regard to the negro, I think that is what he needs a "chance." They have been educated, but they have not had a fair chance of equal chance to make a mark along all lines. If I were able I would send a copy of that issue to every colored man in the United States, and tell him that he was freed, the question was asked, "Can the negro learn anything?" I would like to know if they have not answered that question satisfactorily to America. But after they are educated they have nothing to do. Why don't they buy land and have industries of their own? They are asked but they can't buy when they can find no property for sale, or when they must pay all down, when their brother whites have had all the reign for over 20 years and they can secure the same property by paying a little down. And so I thank you, sir, and I hope the day will come when we will not be looked on with amazement because we are black, but when we prove to be law-abiding citizens we will be treated the same as other citizens. I am yours for my race and people. —J. B. Boddie, Pastor Shiloh Baptist church.

THE GERMAN-AMERICAN.

Andrew Carnegie in the World's Work. The German as we know him at home and in the United States is in the main, steady, sober, methodical, thorough, self-respecting, of fine domestic tastes, and admirable workman and superintendent. Thanks to the contribution of Germany, among other causes, we had many thousands of Germans in our service, of whom at least four whom I recall became partners and earned the millions of dollars they obtained. They fled from the conscription of their sons, and to-day the son of a German who left his country largely for the same reason is at the head of the greatest manufacturing corporation in the world. We owe a valuable taxation to one of these men. The value of the German element in America can scarcely be believed except by those who, like myself, know it by experience.

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